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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 112858
E.O. 12065: GDS 4/28/86 (BUSHNELL, JOHN A.)
TAGS: PINT, OAS, JM
SUBJECT: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ELECTIONS
1. C ENTIRE TEXT.
2. IN VARIOUS REPORTS EMBASSY HAS ALERTED DEPARTMENT TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT GOJ MIGHT BE REQUESTING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO FACILITATE THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS, A PREREQUISITE TO THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND A KEY DETERMINANT OF THEIR TIMING. THE OAS HAS EXPERIENCE IN PROVIDING THIS SORT OF ASSISTANCE (IT DID SO IN HONDURAS RECENTLY) AND, ACCORDING TO SECRETARY GENERAL ORFILA, WOULD BE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO CONSIDER A SPECIFIC JAMAICAN REQUEST. FUNDS FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE ARE LIMITED
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AND MIGHT, THEREFORE, HAVE TO BE DRAWN FROM OTHER OAS PROJECTS IN JAMAICA THAT COULD BE DELAYED OR DEFERRED. AN ARRANGEMENT FOR THE OAS TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BOOST THE PROSPECTS FOR AN EARLY ELECTION (ON TERMS AGREEABLE TO BOTH THE PNP AND JLP) AND, MORE BROADLY, FOCUS THE INSTITUTION'S INTEREST ON THE JAMAICAN ELECTION. THIS INTEREST MIGHT SERVE TO DAMPEN IRRESPONSIBLE ACTS OR CONVINCE EXTREMISTS IN THE PNP OF THE RISKS ATTENDING ANY UNCONSTITUTIONAL ACTS. OAS ELECTION OBSERVERS MIGHT ALSO BECOME A POSSIBILITY IF MANLEY LIFTS HIS PRESENT OPPOSITION TO OUTSIDE OBSERVERS, WHICH JAMAICA SENT TO ZIMBABWE.
3. ACTION: EMBASSY SHOULD PLANT THE SUGGESTION OF APPROACHING THE OAS TO APPROPRIATE JAMAICAN OFFICIALS, IN THE MANNER YOU DEEM TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THIS MIGHT BEST BE DONE WITH ELECTORAL COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MILLS, AS OPPOSED TO THE TWO PARTY
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LEADERS, BUT WE LEAVE THE MATTER TO YOUR DISCRETION.
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